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ABSTRACT

This study focused on the development of an organizational model for an inservice training program for teachers of disadvantaged adults in a central Georgia school system, with emphasis on the importance of understanding the motives or causal factors that lead to participation. Information was obtained from teachers and students about factors that cause the students to participate in adult basic education classes. Information was also obtained from administrators concerning essential administrative services. This information has been incorporated in a model of the various steps involved in organizing and conducting the inservice education of teachers of disadvantaged adults. The steps establish: (a) essential administrative supportive services, (b) needs of teachers, (c) differences between motives of adult basic education students for participation and the assumptions of teachers regarding motives, (d) objectives, (e) course content, (f) methodology, and (g) outcomes. Suggested activities are discussed to implement the steps. (Author/JA)

A Model, With Emphasis on Factors Related to Participation, for the Organization of In-service Education of Teachers of Disadvantaged Adults at the Local School District Level*

by

Doris Hill Adams

In-service education for Adult Basic Education (ABE) teachers is a relatively new development, characterized largely by short term institutes at the national, regional and state levels. While there have been training programs at these three levels, there are no existing models for in-service training program for ABE teachers at the local level with specific emphasis on factors related to participation.

ABE teachers need to understand the factors that immediately cause disadvantaged adults to participate in educational experiences and more specifically they need to know how to organize and adjust learning experiences in view of the reasons that prompt participation.

Sheats and others[1] found that:

> . . .over two-thirds of these students attended night classes for reasons other than course content. They expected, for example, to make friends, to get away from the house, to learn some kind of escape experience.

Houle[2] has observed that people who participate in adult education do so for a variety of reasons. After exploring the nature of participation, he concluded that three orientations seemed to prevail: (1) activity-oriented, (2) goal-oriented, and (3) learning-oriented.

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*This report is based on the doctoral dissertation, "Designing a Model, With Emphasis on Factors Related to Participation, for the In-service Education of Teachers of Disadvantaged Adults," by Doris Hill Adams, University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia, 1971.

The activity-oriented person participated primarily because adult education was an event that was more acceptable than other alternatives he had available to him. The adult student wanted something to do and adult education was available. This may have been seen as a form of socializing for the adult. The goal-oriented participant was enrolled in adult education primarily because he wanted to reach some particular end which he saw as desirable, such as acquiring some particular skill, or intellectual mastery of some subject area. Participants who were learning-oriented tended to see education as a continuous process, as an end in itself.

Sheffield[3] later refined the three basic orientations of Houle's formulation into five classes that he termed learning, desire for sociability, personal goals, societal goals, and need fulfillment. One of the research limitations of this approach is difficulty of placing a participant into one of these orientations. It is possible that an adult participates in educational experiences with multiple orientations, none of which is necessarily predominant over the others.

Ingham's[4] study has some areas of similarity to that of Sheffield. Ingham investigated the reported "leisure satisfaction" of his respondents and found four leisure satisfaction pattern "types," three of which appeared to be compatible with the three Houle orientations. His study was conducted to test techniques that would provide an efficient and objective measurement of the extent to which adults engage in educative behavior, and to test one possible explanation of why some adults engage more extensively than others in educative activities.

Verner and Booth[5] state that adults are impelled to seek further learning by their awareness of a need for knowledge or skills to solve problems or by a desire to enhance their personal development. While this awareness of educational needs may have led some adults to participate in an educational activity need not necessarily be to learn anything. Participation in adult education may arise from social needs unrelated to learning.

In the Johnstone study,[6] participants were asked to tell in their own words how they first came to enroll in an adult education course. A majority recalled some kind of occupational reason. First, about 33 per cent mentioned preparation for a new job, a first job after leaving school, a new job to replace one already held, or vocational training encountered either upon entry into or discharge from the armed forces. A second group of about 20 per cent mentioned additional training in a line of work they had already entered. About one participant in ten recalled some change in family status which prompted his or her first ventures into continuing education. Family expansion and the lessening of family responsibilities were given as reasons about equally often. The main things people remembered about how they first came to enroll in courses, then, were preparation for new jobs, advancement in present jobs, relationships with other people, and changes in status or composition of their families.

Many of these studies did not refer to ABE students; however, it can be assumed that disadvantaged adults would possess, in addition to needs

and drives unique to them, many of the same human drives that prompt other adults to participate in an educational experience.

Too often discrepancies exist between teacher perception of ABE students' reasons for participation in ABE classes and reasons advanced by students as to why they participate in these classes. From the studies of participation, reports of seminars, workshops and institutes, it is perceived that the ideas and suggestions contained in them need reorganization to focus on their usefulness on local school district training and that some additional steps need to be taken. Hence a model, Figure 1 was designed to embrace six basic steps which emerged from a synthesis of information. These steps appear to characterize effective in-service education programs for teachers of adult basic education. These six steps are as follows: (See Figure 1)

A Diagram of a Model, with Emphasis on Factors Related to Participation, for the Organization of the In-service Education of Teachers of Disadvantaged Adults at the Local School District Level

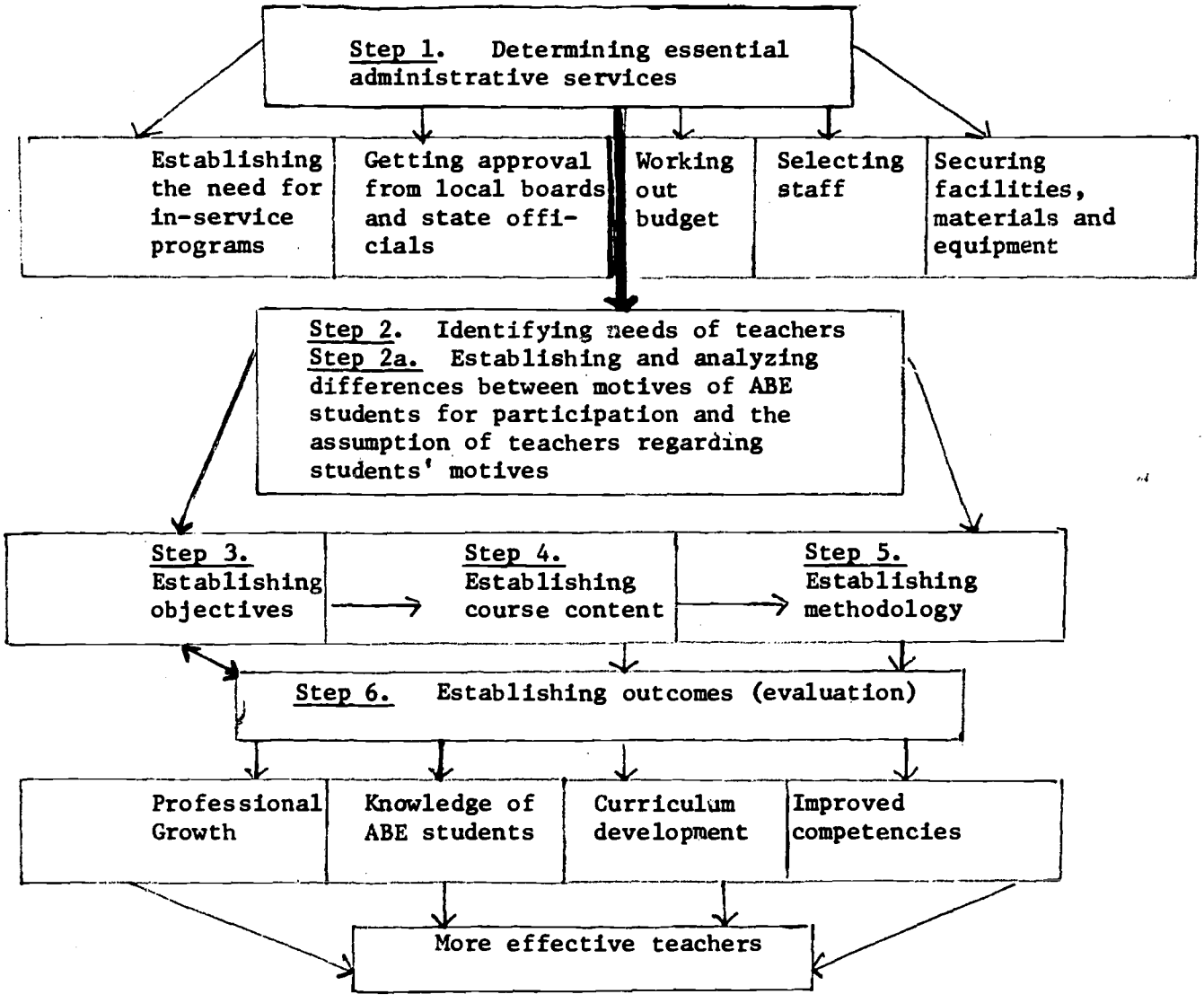

Figure 1

Step 1. Developing Essential Administrative Supporting Services

Step 2. Identifying Needs of Teachers

2a. Establishing and Analyzing Differences between the Motives of ABE Students for participating in ABE Classes and the Assumptions of Teachers Regarding Motives

Step 3. Establishing Objectives

Step 4. Selecting Course Content

Step 5. Adapating Techniques and Methods to the Local Program

Step 6. Establishing Outcomes

Steps 1 and 2a required original investigation and the remaining steps essentially consisted of adpating materials already available.

This article will deal specifically with those two steps, Steps 1 and 2a which required investigation.

Population and Procedure

Ten ABE classes chosen randomly from six selected centers in Middle Georgia constituted the population for the study and five administrators of adult education in the Middle Georgia area were interviewed to help establish and verify certain administrative problems of in-service training at the local level.

Since little attention has been given to the supporting administrative services in implementing in-service education programs for ABE teachers; an effort was made to determine what these factors were. In order to do this, Federal guidelines and the Georgia State Plan were read, five ABE administrators were interviewed and discussions were held with

several ABE teachers. From these four sources stem a set of critical administrative services that any person proposing to establish or carry on in-service training programs should understand.

These services were as follows:

1. Approval for a program
2. Budget
3. Staff
4. Facilities

Two companion questionnaires, each of 21 items, were developed for the study. One was administered to 10 ABE teachers; the other to 100 ABE students. The instruments consisted of 21 selected reasons for ABE students participating in an educational experience. Complete data were obtained from 100 of the 150 students enrolled. Ten ABE teachers selected for the study completed the instrument designed for them.

Information gathered from the questionnaire was analyzed to determine the difference between the motives of the adults for participating in ABE classes and the assumptions the teachers held for their participation. The mean score of each item on the questionnaire was obtained both from the teachers and the students. The items were then ranked number 1 through 21 with separate columns for teacher and student ranking. The difference from the teacher ranking and the student ranking was obtained and squared in order to run a Spearman's rank order difference correlation of the responses.

The results of the rankings of teachers and students are shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1. TEACHERS AND STUDENTS RANKING OF ITEMS

Items	T* Teachers item S* Students item	Teachers Ranking	Students Ranking
1.	T-To enjoy school life again S-I love school	4	21
2.	T-To learn S-I want to learn	1	3
3.	T-To be accepted S-I want to be liked by my friends.	3	19
4.	T-To be sociable S-I like to meet friends.	2	20
5.	T-To be a better citizen S-I want to be a better person.	5	2
6.	T-To be a better provider S-I want to make home better.	6	1
7.	T-To gain respect from the family S-I want to make my family proud of me.	7	4
8.	T-To pass the GED test S-I want to pass the high school test.	18	6
9.	T-To read the newspaper S-I want to read the newspaper.	15	9
10.	T-To learn to read the Bible S-I want to read the Bible.	14	10
11.	T-To learn to write S-I want to learn how to write.	11	17
12.	T-To help get better employment S-I want to get a better job.	10	5
13.	T-To get help for his present job S-I need this for my job.	19	7
14.	T-To improve in mathematics S-I want to learn arithmetic.	12	16
15.	T-To be retrained for a new job S-I want training for another job.	13	15
16.	T-To be able to sign checks S-I want to sign my name to checks.	17	11
17.	T-To learn how to spell S-I want to learn how to spell.	9	13
18.	T-To learn how to budget S-I want to learn how to save my money.	16	12
19.	T-To be able to go to high school S-I want to go to high school	20	8
20.	T-To help the children with their lesson S-I want to help my children with their lesson.	8	18
21.	T-To be able to go to college S-I want to go to college.	21	14

There was a dissimilarity in the ranking of items by the teachers and students regarding the causal agents that prompted students to participate in ABE classes. These responses indicated that the teachers did not know the prime motives of their students for participating in ABE classes. Areas deemed important in helping ABE students develop life skills, and in which difference in ranking occurred were: (1) to be a better provider, (2) to be a better citizen, (3) to learn, (4) to gain respect from the family, (5) to help get better employment, and (6) to pass the GED test. The importance and significance of these findings for actual classroom teaching are the significant factors.

The relationship between the teachers' ranking and students' ranking in Table 2 was indicated by a rho ("r") of -.898, which was significant at the .01 level. The coefficient exceeded its critical ratio of .576; thus, this relationship was statistically significant. The negative coefficient indicated that the students and the teachers were not placing emphasis in the same places on the items. The importance of these findings lies not so much in the statistical relationship as in the implication for teacher training and the conduct of learning activities. The chief areas in which differences appear that would affect the instructional program were:

1. I want to make home better
2. I want to be a better citizen.
3. I want to learn.
4. I want to make my family proud of me.
5. I want to get a better job.
6. I want to pass the high school test.

TABLE 2. SPEARMAN'S RANK DIFFERENCE CORRELATION OF TEACHERS AND STUDENTS TO ITEMS ON QUESTIONNAIRE

Paired variables	Number of items	rho	Criterion* P .01
ABE teachers vs. ABE students	21	-.898	.576

*Spearman's rank-difference correlation .576 significant at .01 level.

Analysis of Step 1.

Essential Administrative Supporting Services

1. Approval for the Program. With the passage of Title IIB of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, the federal government gave its full approval and support to the task of helping adults acquire the basic skills of reading, writing and computing. Congress transferred administration of this program to the Office of Education Act of 1966.

Realizing that the needs of adults are different from those of children, the Adult Education Branch of the U.S. Office of Education in 1966 funded a series of teacher-training institutes whose purpose was to orient teachers and administrators to the needs of the educationally disadvantaged adult. Since 1966 the number of teacher-training institutes has expanded each year.[7]

2. Budget. Each adult administrator operates within a unique set of budget variables and circumstances, as he prepares his materials for the annual budgeting.

Most of the monies for ABE programs come from federal funds. An increase in the budget for adult basic education programs from $40 to $50 million was made in 1969. The HEW appropriation bill for fiscal year 1969 set the figure at $45 million, which was particularly significant because ABE was one of the few programs in the U.S. Office of Education slated for an increase in a year in which the mood was one of belt-tightening and program reduction.[8]

Each local school district develops and continuously modifies its own characteristic budgeting process. The involvement of the entire personnel is needed to meet the normal considerations encountered in the identification and preparation of a budget for continuing programs. The local budget is prepared in accordance with the Federal, state and local requirements for the use of ABE funds. This process can be unwieldy and should be a joint effort of the ABE administrative team to produce a document that meets legal requirements and presents a coordinated instructional program through a fiscal document.

The flow of ABE funds to the local systems is shown in Figure 2 on the following page.

3. Staff. An important job of the administrator is his selection of the coordinator and teachers of the program. Local coordinators should be able to specify the competencies needed for quality instruction. These specifications can then be used as criteria for determining needed areas of training, and providing additional input from external sources to overcome deficiencies in staff competency.

4. Facilities. School facilities are often not available for in-service programs. In such cases, training could be conducted in meeting rooms at local banks, labor organizations, churches, community rooms of public housing units, and other public or private organizations. These community facilities are more often centrally located andmmore comfortable than meeting places in the school.

There is an increasing trend toward the planning and construction of facilities especially suited for adult education. Outstanding examples of facilities especially designed for adult education are some university continuing education centers, industrial training centers and ABE learning centers. The ABE learning center encompassing a learning laboratory is a relatively new approach in serving basic educational needs of the adult population.

The fact that administrators have many-faceted responsibilities is generally recognized. In fact, one could say that any adult education program in any location reflects the ability of the administrator to synthesize his efforts with those of the individual, organizations and agencies who work together to develop the program.

Analysis of Step 2a.

Establishing and Analyzing Differences between Motives of ABE Students for Participation and the Assumptions of Teachers Regarding Students Motives

Data gathered in Middle Georgia revealed important differences between students' statements regarding their reasons for participating in ABE classes and teachers' assumptions regarding the reasons for participation of the same students. It is likely that a difference

How ABE Classes Are Funded

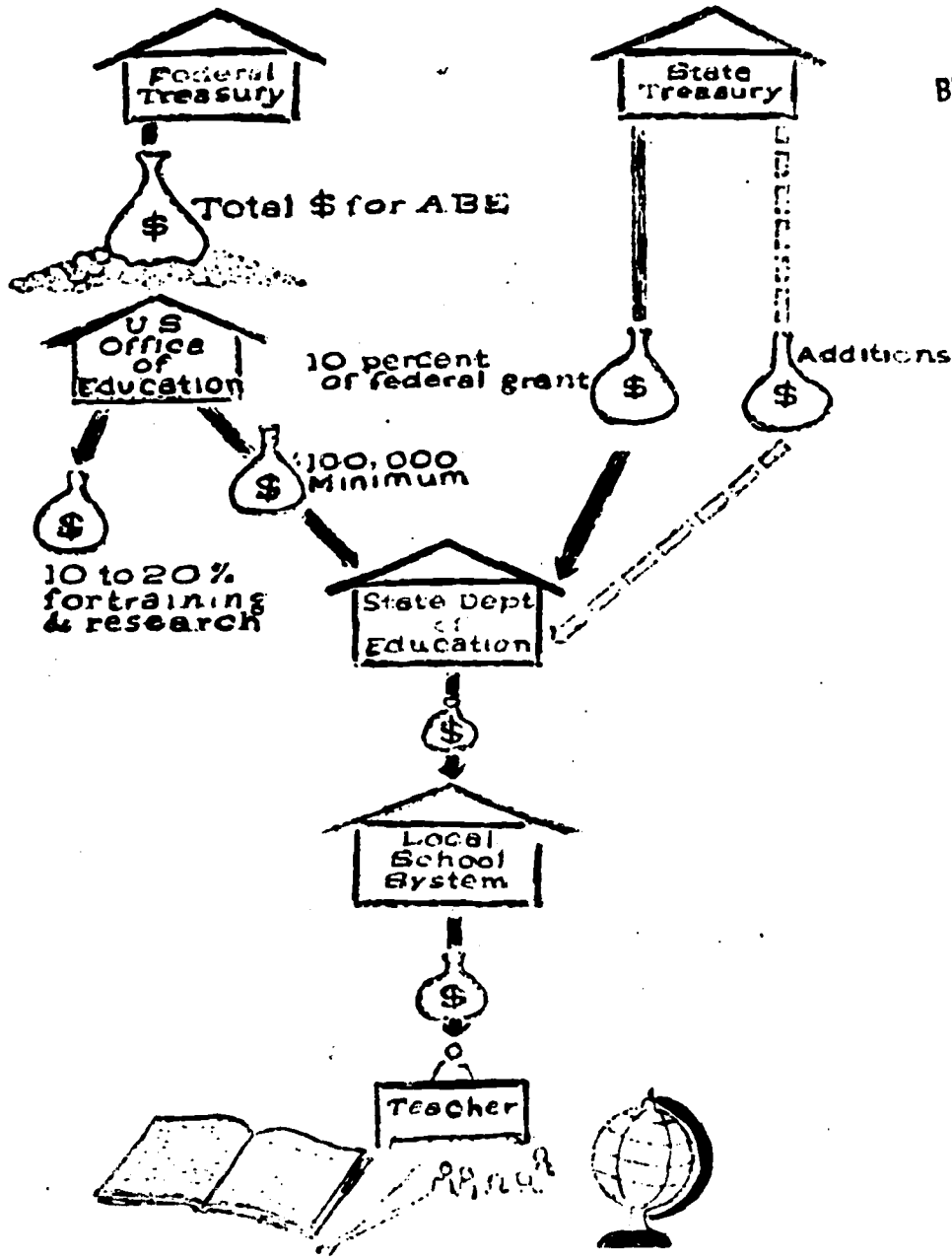

Figure 2

[1] Curtis Ulmer, Teaching the Disadvantaged Adult (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia, 1968), p. 156.

between teacher assumptions and student statements regarding motives or, as defined in this study, the causal factors that lead to participation in ABE classes would be equally sharp in any school system in which the teachers of ABE classes are drawn primarily from the ranks of elementary and secondary schools. Hence, the need to establish whether such a difference actually exists and the operational significance of such differences should be an important part of any in-service education program for ABE teachers.

Practical Applications for Teachers

Items that received the highest ranking by the students are as follows:

Ranked 1. I want to make home better.

Ranked 2. I want to be a better citizen.

Ranked 3. I want to learn.

Ranked 4. I want to make my family proud of me.

Ranked 5. I want to get a better job.

Ranked 6. I want to pass the high school test.

Relative ranking of items given by students and teachers will be indicated by the letters S(students) and T (teachers).

Here are some applications that could be useful to teachers with information regarding the reasons that students participate in ABE classes.

TO LEARN (Ranking: S/3; T/1). Students gave a lower ranking to a general desire to learn than did the teachers in the Middle Georgia area.

The significance of this gap lies in two different, but related, factors in organizing or guiding learning experiences for any group of disadvantaged adults.

First, the fact that both teachers and students listed this causal agent among the first five factors reveals an underlying clarity in both teachers' and students' perceptions of learning as a major route to the achieving of other important life goals. The students are in the classroom because they accept this fact. The teachers have--and apparently in the Middle Georgia area realized it--a strong causal agent to help their efforts along.

The students could be exposed to the benefits of government, as well as to their duties and responsibilities. Teachers could distribute information on social security, Medicare, and local, county and state health and welfare agencies. These materials may be used as the basis for reading and writing practice and for group discussion.

TO MAKE MY FAMILY PROUD OF ME (Ranking: S/4; T/7). The strength of family ties and the influence of family attitudes and pressures are revealed in the ranking students gave to this item. How does a teacher respond to this force in shaping an educational experience? What makes a family "proud" of one of its members? How does the teacher translate this awareness into specific goals for the individual? There appear to be three approaches a teacher could take in tapping this motivating agent.

First, it is likely that any achievement that is specifically recognized by the teacher of the school system will help. Passing the

GED test, winning a certificate in any of various crafts or occupational skills, special citations from the school, the teacher or one's classmates--all these are tools that the ABE teacher has available to relate specific classroom content and activities to motivational factors the individual has already declared to be important to him.

Second, increased ability to communicate with other people may show up in the form of improved relations with one's family. Greater precision in the use of words; increased sensitivity to the moods, needs and interests of others, with a consequent damper placed on the pertinent emphasis on one's own interests; awareness of specific steps that can be taken to knit the family unit more closely together, such as effective budgeting to use the family income, regularly planning some activities that most families can do together, providing for other family members to air their problems, frustrations, hopes and anxities--these activities and accomplishments too, can be causal factors that lead one's family to be proud of him.

The successful ABE teacher will, therefore, stress these factors that lead to improved communication with one's family and to increase the contribution that one can make to family stability and growth. Important though external recognitions such as certificates, diplomas and others may be, they are of secondary importance to the basic strengthening of family ties.

TO GET A BETTER JOB (Ranking: S/5; T/10). It is difficult to explain the different ranking assigned by teachers and students to this item. Since the population studied was predominantly female, teachers may have assumed that better jobs were not available. For that reason, teachers may have

placed less importance on this item than students. If this is true, however, teachers should still make clear and explicit their reasons for not giving greater emphasis to the acquisition of those attitudes and relationships that lead to success in the world of work. It should be pointed out that the Middle Georgia ABE program is not geared to vocational education (although there are significant exceptions elsewhere in the country), nor are most of the ABE programs elsewhere. Hence, teachers may have reasoned that little attention should be given to the world of work; students, quite obviously, disagreed with this assessment and a major factor for making the ABE program relevant to the needs and interests of the Middle Georgia students was overlooked or given little attention.

Short of teaching the skills required for a specific job, what can teachers do to relate ABE more specifically to the hopes of their students for a better job? Three approaches are suggested:

First, the importance of the skills taught to obtaining a better job could be emphasized repeatedly. Second, the need to know how to get along with people in any business organization should be stressed. Research in other areas has indicated that failure to get along with people is more often the reason for losing a job than inability to perform the specific skills associated with any job; the tasks of one worker are so interrelated with those assigned to another worker that cooperation and teamwork are essential in the modern business and industrial world. Finally, the teacher could emphasize the importance of such habits as punctuality and personal cleanliness, as well as such attitudes as putting in a fair day's work for a fair day's pay. Attitudes and habits of these types formed major portions of the training program conducted by the Opportunities Industrialization Center (OIC) movement that originated in Philadelphia with Rev. Leon Sullivan and

has spread to many other cities around the country.

TO PASS THE HIGH SCHOOL TEST (Ranking: S/6; T/18). With the wide range of difference asssigned to this item by teachers and students, teachers may have assumed that it was useless to try to get a high school diploma late in life. The population studied in Middle Georgia has the largest percentage in the 41-45 age bracket. Regardless of age differences, students may have been simply seeking a second chance after failing or forfeiting the first chance. It must be noted, however, that the ABE program encompasses grades 0 through 8. It does lay the ground work for the adults to pass a high school test. Teachers may not have stressed the importance of passing the high school test, which was at variance with the desires of the disadvantaged.

To prepare students to take the high school test, teachers could make the students test-oriented. Tests for diagnosis could be given and placement could be used in combination with informal procedures such as personal data and educational and employment background of the students. The information gathered could be used in helping the ABE student set his goals. These goals, then, will be considered as the basis for evaluating his progress. It is very important to teach the adult how to allocate his time wisely, to re-read questions, check computations and to be alert to qualifying adjectives in test questions. By teaching these skills, how to take a test then becomes an invaluable part of the student's curriculum.

The effective teacher will see that constant feedback is a natural consequence of the testing situation for the student in the learning process. The student will need this information for planning, to re-evaluate and

revise his goals. The information obtained through the use of tests should be an aid to the student and the teacher in reaching the desired objectives. Such objectives may be measuring achievement in the skill areas, developing suitability for job placement and job promotion, and determining competency levels. When prepared tests are administered, the students' objectives must still be in the foreground with what they can do to help the student learn more about himself, his characteristics and his potentialities.

The aforementioned considerations include some of the efforts that teachers could make in classroom situations to teach students according to their motives and needs. However, for all the ranked items, teachers have a responsibility to the students. If they start with the causal agents and concerns that the disadvantaged adult brings into the learning situation, and utilize carefully selected materials related to these reasons to teach the basic skills, better students will result as well as a better program. Good teachers will look for specific interests and motives of their individual students, the real reasons the adult is attending the learning group, and attempt to modify standard course work accordingly.

Unfortunately, if teacher assumptions of reason not coincide with the students' reasons, the basic cause for his enrollment is overlooked and selected and adequate efforts made to provide gratification is without benefit to the students.

While an understanding of common adult motives forms a preliminary basis for satisfactory instruction, teachers seriously interested in adult motivation must review the specific reasons of each individual in the class if immediate success is to be achieved for each particular

student and his objectives. Success can only be achieved after interaction and discussion with students in order to modify standard lessons where necessary. Such interaction also helps ensure that each student understands the pertinent relationships between the lesson and his own life, as well as the teacher's interest in him.

SUMMARY

The ABE teacher, working together with the student, must adapt the standard program so that it becomes the vehicle through which motives can be maintained until the objectives are achieved. If the teacher lacks an understanding of these basic needs and causal agents, inefficient learning, boredom and a feeling that the activity has no personal relevance prevails. An understanding of the motives and appropriate modifications of the program should bring interest, vitality and continued participation.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Paul Sheats, et al., Adult Education (New York: The Dryden Press, 1963), p. 325.

[2]Cyril Houle, The Inquiring Mind (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1961).

[3]Sherman Sheffield, "The Orientations of Adult Continuing Learners," The Continuing Learner, ed. by Daniel Soloman (Chicago: CSLEA, 1964), pp. 1-22.

[4]Roy Ingham, "The Relationship of Educative Behavior to the Leisure Satisfaction of College Alumnae," The Continuing Learner, ed. by Daniel Soloman (Chicago: CSLEA, 1964), pp. 23-40.

[5]Coolie Verner, Adult Education (New York: The Center for Applied Research in Education, 1964), pp. 50-51.

[6]John W. C. Johnstone and Ramon Rivera, Volunteers for Learning (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1965), pp. 9-10.

[7]Edward J. Brice, "Adult Basic Education: No Retreat from Tomorrow," in Leadership Skills in Adult Basic Education, A Resource Document and Workshop Report (Florida State University, July 8-26, 1966), p. 7.

[8]Jules Pagano, "Washington View," Adult Leadership, XIX, No. 8, February, 1971, p. 261.